

Charitable Solicitations

This Guideline is provided as an information resource only. For authoritative advice, contact the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board.

Limitations on solicitation

A state public official should not solicit a charitable or other contribution from anyone for an organization of which the official or the official's spouse or legal dependent is an officer, director, employee or authorized representative or agent.

A state public official should not solicit a charitable or other contribution for any organization from a lobbyist, from an organization that employs a lobbyist, or from any person regulated by or doing business with the official's agency.

A state public official should not solicit a contribution for a state agency or state program from a lobbyist, from an organization that employs a lobbyist, or from any person regulated by or doing business with the official's agency.

A state public official may solicit a contribution for a charitable organization with which neither the official nor a member of the official's immediate family is associated from non-lobbyists and from businesses and organizations that do not employ a lobbyist.

A solicitation includes both an oral, written, and electronic communication.

Solutions for instances when solicitation is not permitted

GOVERNMENT-RELATED EVENTS. A state agency seeking private support for a government-related activity may request assistance from a multi-state or national association with which the agency is affiliated. An agency may also request the Department of Commerce to solicit support for events promoting economic development or tourism and for conferences of multistate, national, or international associations of government officials. An agency may also request the Department of Tourism to solicit support for events promoting tourism.

LETTERHEAD AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT. An official affiliated with a private organization may permit the appearance of his or her name and public office on the organization's letterhead in the same style and prominence in which others similarly affiliated with the organization are identified. An official may also write a letter of endorsement for an organization that the organization may include in a fundraising solicitation, even if it is sent to a lobbyist or lobbying principal, as long as the endorsement letter does not solicit, urge, or endorse contributing to the organization.

Legal references: §13.625, §19.45 (2) and (3), and §19.56 (3), *Wisconsin Statutes*